

provided for meat and poultry inspection will ensure adequate inspection coverage and allow the agency to further implement the modernization of the inspection system that I announced on July 6, 1996. I am also pleased that the Act provides almost all of the requested level for my Administration's food safety initiative and the requested level for our efforts to reduce children's access to tobacco products.

In addition, the Act provides significant increases in rural development programs to improve the quality of life in rural America and help diversify the rural economy. The Act also includes a portion of my proposal to create a Rural Development Performance Partnership, which will provide greater flexibility to tailor Federal assistance to local needs, reflecting my Administration's belief that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to the economic challenges facing rural areas. I will continue to seek authority to utilize the full flexibility that was authorized for these programs in the 1996 Farm Bill.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 18, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2160, approved November 18, was assigned Public Law 105-86.

**Teleconference Remarks to the
Council of Jewish Federations**
November 18, 1997

Thank you. And, ladies and gentlemen, I have been told that because I was a few moments late, that Dore Gold filled in for me, and that's a pretty good substitute. I want to thank him as well.

It's an honor for me to be able to speak to the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly and to all of you who are watching your local federations over the CJF satellite network. I'm pleased to know that Connie Giles, Joel Tauber, Billie Gold have convened this general assembly to further the proud tradition of the Jewish federation system, and I trust that my good friend Jeff Smulyan is being a gracious host in his home town of Indianapolis.

Six years ago, when I announced my candidacy for President, I said that I had a vision for America in the 21st century—a vision that would put us on a mission to keep the American dream alive for every person who is responsible enough to work for it, to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, and to bring our own people together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America.

We've worked hard to advance this vision here at home, thanks in great measure to the volunteer efforts of groups like CJF and Jewish federations all across our Nation. I share with you the deep belief that the strength of our society is the product of our active commitment to one another. Volunteer organizations are the glue that hold our communities together, and I've worked hard to make sure the National Government sticks by you as your steadfast partner.

If not for Government support, Jewish federations and other groups would have to drastically scale back their health and human service efforts. We must never let this happen.

We also know we can't allow Congress to deny charities and other not-for-profit groups the right to take a stand on public issues. It would lessen our democracy if you were deprived of your voice, for your voice has given strength and support to millions of other Americans. For example, as we worked to enact a balanced budget, you made sure we did it in the right way. You spoke out on behalf of legal immigrants; together, we restored critical health and disability benefits that had been taken from these groups unfairly. You spoke out on behalf of older Americans, and together we protected and strengthened Medicare and Medicaid. And I'm very grateful for your voice and your support.

I would also like to thank you for your support of our administration's effort to expand peace and stability in the Middle East and around the world. We must never give in to the forces of destruction and terror. We must never give up on promoting peace. Our law enforcement officials went halfway around the world to bring to justice the man responsible for the cold-blooded murder of Americans outside the CIA Headquarters. The

World Trade Center bombers are going to jail for a long, long time. Saddam Hussein cannot be allowed to expel international weapons inspectors because we cannot accept another dictator with weapons of mass destruction.

And I want to reiterate to you my solemn and personal commitment that we will continue to press forward on all fronts to redeem the promise of the peace process in the Middle East. The road to peace is never easy, but with confidence and determination and patience, let us continue to travel that road.

Let us also work together to expand religious freedom around the world. Hillary, just a few minutes ago, returned to the White House from her trip to Central Asia, Ukraine, and Russia, where she visited several centuries-old synagogues and met with members of Jewish communities that have reemerged after years of oppression under Soviet rule. These visits highlighted our strong conviction that the transition of peaceful democracy requires a deep commitment to religious, cultural, and ethnic tolerance.

And I know all of you believe that tolerance of difference is no less important here at home. We've overcome many of the challenges that our grandparents and great-grandparents faced when they arrived on these shores, but we still have a lot of work to do to bring all of us together into one America.

So in addition to what you do day in and day out to help America seize the opportunity inherent in our diversity, I ask for your help in two other important priorities. First of all, let me urge you to stand up for Bill Lann Lee, my nominee to head the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. He is the son of immigrants who has dedicated his entire life to fighting discrimination in all its forms. I've nominated him because I think he's the best person in the country to do the job, and no one—no one—has questioned his ability, his experience, or his integrity. He is being held up for political reasons on the dubious proposition that he shouldn't head the Civil Rights Division because he agrees with the President on the issue of affirmative action.

Second, I ask you to participate in our historic race initiative. For many decades, mem-

bers of the Jewish community have marched side by side with Americans of other faiths and races, fighting for civil rights and racial reconciliation. So I ask you to urge your member federation and coalition partners to convene town hall meetings and find other ways of bringing people together across racial lines to address common concerns. Please help to promote the interaction that allows us to celebrate our differences and still recognize the over-arching values that unite us all.

Ninety years ago, Israel Zangwill coined the term "melting pot" in his play about a young Jewish composer in New York. In that play, he beautifully summed up the promise of our Nation. He said, and I quote, "The palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and the cross. Here shall all races and nations unite. Here shall they come to labor and look forward."

I thank you for what you have done over this past century to unite us and to keep us looking forward. And at the threshold of a new century, I look forward to working with you to keep our beacon shining brightly for all the world to see.

Congratulations on your successful general assembly. Again, thank you for all the support that you have given to our efforts and, most especially, thank you for what you do every day to reflect the best in our country and the best hope of the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:21 p.m. by satellite from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Dore Gold, Policy Advisor to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Conrad Giles, president, Council of Jewish Federations; Joel Tauber and Billie Gold, cochairs, 1997 Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly Planning Committee; and Jeffrey H. Smulyan, chairman and chief executive officer, Emmis Broadcasting.

Remarks to the Democratic Business Council

November 18, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Tom. Steve Grossman, Alan Solomont, and all the people who worked on this dinner tonight, thank you very much for being here.